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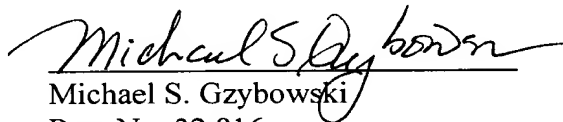
By the present Preliminary Amendment, the specification, claims and abstract have been revised to more clearly describe applicant's invention in accordance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Care has been taken so as to avoid the addition of new matter in the specification, claims and abstract.

Entry of the present Preliminary Amendment prior to the examination of the application is respectfully requested.

In the event applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, applicant hereby petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

Respectfully submitted,


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Changes Made to Specification Paragraphs

The third paragraph beginning on page 2 and continuing on page 3 has been amended as follows:

The first full paragraph on page 3 has been amended as follows:

- -[According to another aspect of this invention, by an improvement in the] Another aspect

of this invention concerns a process for making a disposable diaper comprising an elastically stretchable covering member adapted to cover diaper wearer's crotch and waist regions and a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between a liquid-pervious sheet destined to come in contact with skin of the diaper wearer and the covering member.- -

The second paragraph beginning on page 3 and continuing on page 4 has been amended as follows:

- -[The improvement according] According to this invention one process comprises steps of bonding an elastically stretchable first layer destined to form the covering member and a second layer formed with a plurality of inelastically stretchable continuous fibers together in a plurality of intermittently formed bonding zones and thereby to form a composite sheet, stretching only a portion of the composite sheet in one direction so that the first layer forming the portion may be elastically stretched together with the continuous fibers, and then leaving the composite sheet contract under a contractile force of the first layer to form the covering member.- -

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Changes Made to Claims

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A disposable diaper comprising:

an elastically stretchable covering member [adapted to cover] for covering a diaper wearer's crotch and waist regions; [and a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between]

a liquid-pervious sheet [destined to come in contact] for contacting with skin of said diaper wearer; [and]

a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between said liquid-pervious sheet and said covering member, [wherein:]

said covering member [consists] consisting of an elastically stretchable first layer and an inelastically stretchable second layer formed with a plurality of continuous fibers, [and] said continuous fibers being fixed to said elastically stretchable first layer in at least a pair of bonding zones spaced from each other so that a ratio of L/D , [i.e., a ratio of a] where L is a length [L] of said continuous fiber extending between said pair of the bonding zones [to] and D is a distance [D] in straight line between said pair of bonding zones, is larger in a [desired range] first zone of said covering member than in [the] a remaining zone.

Claim 2 has been amended as follows:

2. (Amended) The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said [desired range] first zone comprises [is defined in] a transversely middle zone of said diaper.

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Claim 3 has been amended as follows:

3. (Amended) The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer [is formed with] comprises at least one of an elastically stretchable film [or] and a nonwoven fabric made of crimped fiber.

Claim 4 has been amended as follows:

4. (Amended) The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said continuous fibers of said inelastically stretchable second layer are made of at least one of polypropylene [or] and propylene copolymer.

Claim 5 has been amended as follows:

5. (Amended) The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer further includes [is formed with] a liquid-impervious sheet and lies inside said second layer.

Claim 6 has been amended as follows:

6. (Amended) The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer further comprises [is formed with] a liquid-impervious sheet and lies inside said inelastically stretchable second layer so that said elastically stretchable first layer [may be used] functions as a liquid-impervious backsheet for said liquid-absorbent core member.

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Claim 7 has been amended as follows:

7. (Amended) A process for making a disposable diaper [comprising] having an elastically stretchable covering member [adapted to cover] for covering a diaper wearer's crotch and waist regions, a liquid-pervious sheet for contacting with skin of said diaper wearer, and a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between [a] said liquid-pervious sheet [destined to come in contact with skin of said diaper wearer] and said covering member, said process comprising the steps of:

[bonding] providing an elastically stretchable first layer destined to form said covering member; [and]

providing a second layer formed with a plurality of inelastically stretchable continuous fibers;

bonding said elastically stretchable first layer and said second layer together [in] at a plurality of intermittently formed bonding zones to [and] thereby [to] form a composite [sheet,] sheet;

stretching only a portion of said composite sheet in one direction so that said elastically stretchable first layer [forming] of said portion may be elastically stretched together with said continuous [fibers,] fibers; and

[then leaving] allowing said composite sheet contract under a contractile force of said first elastically stretchable layer to form said covering member.

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Changes Made to Abstract

A disposable diaper that has a covering member adapted to cover a wearer's crotch and waist regions. The covering member includes an elastically stretchable first layer and an inelastically stretchable second layer formed with a plurality of continuous fibers. The continuous fibers are fixed to the first layer in at least two bonding zones. The covering member presents a particularly large value of L/D , a ratio of a length L of each continuous fiber and a distance D in straight line between each pair of the adjacent bonding zones.

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